ABSTRACT OF THE DISCLOSURE

A docking unit that optically couples optical images obtained from a plurality of (e.g. three) cameras includes at least a synchronous control circuit for controlling image pickup timing of the cameras. A camera controller, which performs an overall control, is constructed capable of bi-directional communication with the synchronous control circuit and a coupling circuit in the docking unit. The communication for exchanging signals between the synchronous control circuit and coupling circuit in the docking unit and the camera controller is invariable regardless of the number of cameras. Thus, this construction simplifies the bi-directional communication to and from the camera controller.